

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the specification as follows:

On page 7, after line 7, please add the following descriptions relating to new Figures 7-9:

Figure 7 is a perspective view of the batten shown in figure 1, including preformed lines of weakness;

Figure 8 is a side elevation showing a batten and cladding assembly, using the battens of figures 1 to 4, according to the invention; and

Figure 9 is a side elevation of a batten according to another embodiment of the invention, including a series of transverse channels formed in an outer surface of the batten.

On page 8, lines 19-22, please replace the sentence beginning “It also incorporates...” and ending “...cutting or sawing” with the following amended sentence:

It also incorporates pre-formed lines of weakness (~~not shown~~)<sup>17</sup> disposed at regular intervals to permit the batten to be manually snapped or broken into smaller sections of desired length, without the need for cutting or sawing.